



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION



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March 22, 2013

Senator Toni N. Harp  
Representative Toni E. Walker  
Appropriations Committee  
Legislative Office Building Room 2700  
Hartford CT, 06106

### **RE: Testimony In Opposition To Sections of H.B. No. 6354 An Act Implementing The Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning General Government**

Dear Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and members of the  
Appropriations Committee,

My name is Mui Mui Hin-McCormick, Executive Director of Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (APAAC). On behalf of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission I submit testimony in opposition to sections of H.B. No. 6354 that would consolidate the five Legislative Commissions (Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission, African American Affairs Commission, Latino & Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, and Permanent Commission on Status of Women) into the Commission on Citizen Advocacy and eliminate the Aging Commission. APAAC urges you to allow each of the six Commissions to remain as separate agencies in order to address the increasing needs of each of the unique populations.

Our Commission represents one of the fastest growing minority populations. U. S. Census reported Asian Pacific American (APA) population grew in Connecticut from 95,368 in 2000 to 157,088 in 2010, which is remarkable as this is a 65% increase in just ten years. APAAC represents almost fifty countries and numerous Asian languages. Without APAAC there would be limited to no representation on the needs of the APA community in government. APAAC makes recommendations to the Governor, General Assembly, state agencies, service providers, etc. on health, safety, education, economic self-sufficiency and efforts to remain free from discrimination within the APA community in Connecticut. APAAC focuses on APA issues; partnering with various agencies, groups, communities etc. to address the rising concerns in education, business & economics, health care, behavioral health, legal, and housing. Our APA community struggles with finding appropriate cultural and linguistic behavioral health

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services to access because there is a lack of providers that address APA needs. For example, on April 12<sup>th</sup> APAAC will be sponsoring a mental health forum in which Dr. Eliza Noh, Associate Professor and coordinator of Asian American Studies at California State University, will present on "Casualties" of the Model Minority Myth: The Role of Racial Ideology in Asian American Female Suicidality. APAAC through collaboration is able to sponsor this important event open to the public and General Assembly offering information on an issue that most are not aware about. Dr. Noh's research has produced the following findings:

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Asian American women, ages 15-24.
- Asian American women, ages 15-24 and over 65, have the highest female suicide rates across all racial/ethnic groups.
- Asian American adolescent girls (grades 5-12) demonstrate the highest rates of depression across both race/ethnicity and gender

Additionally, the proposed Commission on Citizen Advocacy in its name alone forgets about many Connecticut residents, including some APA's and other minorities that contribute to Connecticut's economy and wellbeing. APAAC request your support to allow our agency to remain independent and reject the sections of H.B. No. 6354 that would consolidate the five Commissions and eliminate the Commission on Aging. This would allow APAAC to continue to gather and present current information regarding the APA community since there is little to no data available, serves as a liaison between the APA community and government agencies, provide information to the APA community around government and community based services, conduct education and outreach to raise awareness of critical issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Mui Mui Hin-McCormick

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